San Marcos Free Press.

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PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY.

FARM LIFE.

Reasons Why Our Surplus Labor Should Seek the Country.

Mr. O. C. Gibbs, who has recently made an extended trip through the Southwest in the interest of the Chicago *Tribune*, and has given in a series of letters to that paper the results of his observations, concludes the series with the follo ving:

The main facts developed in my somewhat extended investigations have been: that there are almost unlimited quantities of cheap and fertile lands obtainable on easy terms by the actual settler, in a range of climate from that of the Gulf States on the south to Minnesota on the north, capable of producing all the great agricultural staples and the keeping of all kinds of live stock; that these lands only require occupancy and cultivation to reward the husbandman with generous crops, which bring remunerative prices to the producer. While in all our cities and larger towns and manufacturing districts there are great distress and suffering consequent upon lack of employment, and there are thousands of honest, well-disposed people who will have to be supported by charity during the winter, throughout the agricultural districts there is comfort and plenty. In all the country I have passed over, I have met no one who was troubled to know how he was going to get through the winter. Not that all were rich and independent, but they were living under such conditions that the essential wants of shelter, food, and fuel could be supplied by their own unaided efforts; and I am exceedingly desirous that those whose condition and circumstances expose them to the same provocation and suffering which many are now experiencing, but who now have it in their power to take a new departure and place themselves in more hopeful circumstances for the future, should do so.

The flush times during and succeeding the War; the increased demand for all kinds of manufactured goods; the fortunes made in trade and speculation of all kinds, from corn to corner lots; the building, equipment, and running of thousands of miles of new railroads and telegraph lines; the rebuilding of burnt Chicago, and the extension of other towns and cities created a demand for labor of all grades which produced a regular stampede from the country.

FARMING WAS IN DISREPUTE,

and was regarded as too slow and old-fogy an occupation for this advanced age. Its slow and moderate gains cut no figure beside the profits of a "corner in wheat" or sales of corner lots. The young man who had gone to the city and secured employment in a railroad office or store, and who made occasional visits home in all the glory of store clothes, hair-oil, and a gold-headed cane, was the admiration and envy of all his former associates, each of whom resolved to emancipate himself from the drudgery of farm-life at the earliest possible moment. There was a wonderful accession to the ranks of the learned professions, and our medical and law schools were crowded with young men who threw down the pitchfork and forsook the plow for a higher career in life. Even staid, substantial farmers got their heads turned and sold their farms, and came to the city to engage in business and make a fortune. All went swimmingly till the panic struck us, when a change came o'er the spirit of their dream. Gradually, but surely, the squeezing process has been going on, till many schemes and enterprises that but a little while ago were so rich and promising, have been literally squeezed dry, and we have been awakened to the fact that we have a laboring population of all grades—and I include in this all the salaried classes—twice as large as are needed for the work of the present time or likely to be needed for some years to come. The result is that large numbers are without any employment. Others get only occasional and temporary work, and others still resort to all kinds of makeshifts to secure a living—going about with some article to sell or soliciting orders for grocery-houses, printing-offices, and a thousand other things too numerous to mention, while those in regular employments are on salaries largely reduced from former times, and insufficient for the comfortable support of themselves and their families. No theories or plans of workingmen's organizations or labor strikes can remedy this state of things. Nothing short of a plan that will make one day's work provide full pay for two men will do it.

Absolutely the only practical opening for this surplus of our population is in farming upon our cheap lands. Many of the classes of the unemployed, in consequence of age, present and former habits of life, lack the elements necessary to success in farming. Others lack only the necessary means to enable them to make a start. No plans have yet been devised, nor I fear are likely to be, for aiding those without means, but otherwise qualified for success in making a start. But there are those who have accumulated some means, who possess the requisite elements of character to insure success, who are working on salaries, and have nothing better to look forward to than a salary, who now have it in their power to break away, if so disposed, and take a new departure. Many of these are young men for whom the city has already lost its enchantment, and who have youth, health, and energy as a capital to stand upon.

THE CITY HAS LITTTE BETTER

to offer them than a salaried position. Every year the business of the country, both commercial and manufacturing, is becoming more and more concentrated in great firms or corporations, which, whether intentionally or otherwise, freeze out and dry up the smaller concerns. The young mechanic or clerk, instead of in a few years growing into a business, of his own, remains a journeyman or clerk. As middle age and gray hairs approach, the tenure to his position becomes more and more uncertain. If he retains it, it is only by sufferance, and he all the time has the embarrassing consciousness that his employer would rather have a younger man in his place. At last the time comes when he must give way to a younger man, and goes out from the house or corporation to which he has given the best years of his manhood with no adequate accommulations (if any at all) for support in old age. Thenceforth if any employment is attainable it is at boy's pay. There is no more pitiable spectacle to be seen in Chicago than that of elderly men who have filled responsible positions seeking work or following some make-shift employment as a means of maintaining a precarious existence. Such an experience as I have sketched will be that of ninety out of every hundred young men who enter upon salaried positions and remain in our cities. They will be hirelings all their lives.

As a farmer, a man is his own master. I have never encouraged extravagant expectations in regard to the profits of farming. But any man settling on lands wisely selected, and with means enough to make a fair start, may reasonably expect to find himself at the end of ten years the owner of a good farm, well improved and stocked with comfortable buildings, and in receipt of an income sufficient to meet all reasonable wants, leaving no room for fear and anxiety in regard to future support. The opening of a new farm is no holiday business, but with people of small means involves plain living and hard work for a few years. Farming, however, is not the drudgery it was even a few years ago. The labor-saving implements of the present day, the riding-plows and cultivators, the mowing-machine and horse-rake, the self-binding reaper, and other equally important improvements in implements of husbandry have taken the place of simple masculine force, and made it possible for every one to be the "gentleman farmer."

One of the healthiest and most hopeful indications of the times is the fact that the influx from the country to the city is largely stopped, and the tide turned the other way. The hard times have corrected many false notions—among others that farming is not a respectable and desirable employment—and farmers' sons, instead of now as formerly pressing to the city for employment, are sticking by the old farm, or making farms for themselves on new lands, while some of the best elements in our city our moving in the same direction.

Dying Beside His Sweetheart.

Charles Schmitz, jeweler, at 181 Sixth Avenue, returned to his home last evening from a pleasure party in Hoboken. He was with a young lady to whom he was paying his attentions. While sitting in the parlor they had a lover's quarrel. Schmitz begged forgiveness but was refused. Then exclaiming, "I will die! I will die!" he raised a small phial to his mouth. Soon afterward he was dead. He had swallowed cyanide of potassium.—*New York Sun.*

WITHIN a radius of two miles of Oldtown Village, Me., there are now living, the most of them in fair health, 18 men and women of the following ages, to-wit: 96, 80, 82, 80, 84, 82, 101, 82, 86, 80, 82, 87, 84, 80, 90, 88, 85 and 80. Their united ages is 1,534 years, making an average of 85¼. Of the above many of them are about their work as usual; one of them, Deacon John Rigby, is at Milo, doing a job of stone work for that town.

A LOST BOY'S ADVENTURES.

Home Again After Seventeen Years' Wanderings—A Happy Thanksgiving Day in an Iowa Farm-House.

[From the Des Moines (Ia.) Register.]

There was one happy household, at least, in Polk County on Thanksgiving Day. There was rejoicing, and cause for rejoicing, in the home of John Cressout, of Washington Township, over the return of a son, whom they had not seen or heard from for seventeen years.

In 1860, Mr. John Cressout, an humble tiller of the soil in the Buckeye State, resolved to remove to the rich prairies of Iowa with a hope of bettering his condition. His family consisted of his wife and two children—a boy of thirteen and a girl of ten. His health and that of his family was good, and he thought by settling upon a new farm upon the fertile prairies of Iowa, he might secure a competence for himself and them. Accordingly he sold his farm in Ohio, and with his family took up his weary journey overland toward the setting sun.

In those days the railroad facilities were not as abundant as at the present, and the only direct and passable route laid through the city of Chicago. When he arrived at Chicago he tarried a few days in order to confer with some land owners in reference to the purchase of a farm. During their stay in the city, Robert, his son, availed himself of the opportunity to see the sights, and accompanied his tather in his walks about town. One day, while his father was busily engaged in conversation with a land-broker, Robert stepped out, and, seeing a large crowd down the street, thought he would go and find out what was the matter. When he reached the mob and found that it was only a street auction, he determined to go farther on, and pursued his walk down the street until he reached the wharf, where the ships and steamboats were lying by the hundreds. Having never seen a steamboat before, he was naturally lost in wonder. Seeing a great crowd entering one of the large steamboats, he thought he would go on also, and look around, as he supposed the crowd were doing. So he went aboard and wandered down into the cabin, and finally down into the hold where the great engines were situated. While engaged in viewing the wonders about him the steamer loosed her cables, and started on her journey over the lake. He suddenly became aware of the fact that the steamer was moving, and hastened on deck—but too late. The vessel was far out in the lake, and, when he reached the upper deck, the City of Chicago, that held all that was dear on earth to him, was only a speck in the distance. He told his story to the Captain, but in vain. The Captain thought he was only a vagabond who was endeavoring to steal his passage over the lake, and would not listen to him, but told him if he did not keep quiet he would deliver him up to the officers of the law on their arrival at Grand Haven, and have him put in prison. So Robert was compelled to dry his tears and conceal his emotion, knowing that every revolution of the great paddle-wheels of the steamer bore him farther away from his parents and sister.

When his father found his boy was lost he secured the aid of several detectives, and made a thorough search of the city to find him, but in vain. After a fruitless search of over a week, he was compelled to give his son up as lost, and pursue his journeying toward Iowa. The mother's grief knew no bounds. She wept continually, and, like Rachel of old, refused to be comforted. Her boy—her only son, the pride of her heart—was lost, and only God knew what his fate may have been. So, with a broken heart and anxious mind, she took up her journey with her husband and daughter to their new home in Iowa. They reached this State in the fall of 1860, and settled on a new farm of 160 acres, in Washington Township, Polk County. Fortune favored them, and Mr. Cressout made money very fast. He was a prudent, economical man, and his wife was the best of wives—in every sense a helpmeet. His lands grew broader, his herds multiplied, and in a few years he gained a handsome competence. But the loss of his son was the one great shadow of his life, as well as that of his wife. Around their cheerful fireside the subject would be related, and the tears of sorrow would fall like summer rain whenever Robert's name was mentioned.

But what of Robert? When he found himself in Grand Haven, Mich., the destination of the steamer, he knew not what to do. He had no money with which to telegraph to his friends, and no one would believe his story. So he was compelled to go to work at something, and finally secured employment in a large saw-mill as a driver of a saw-dust cart. He worked here for sometime, until he obtained some money, and then set about trying to find his parents. He advertised in the Chicago papers, but to avail. At last he gave it up and concluded it was useless to continue the search. His life was passed for several years in Michigan. He worked at odd jobs in various towns and cities in that State—Detroit, Lansing, Ann Arbor, Jackson, Saginaw, and others. At last he determined to come to Iowa, and endeavor once more to find his parents. He landed in Iowa in 1874, and went to work in Dubuque as clerk in one of the hotels. He hoped by occupying this position to gain some clew as to the whereabouts of his parents. But time passed on, and he failed to hear any tidings of them. About a month ago he saw the name of John Cressout in the *State Register*, and thought it must be that of his father. He came to this city the Monday before Thanksgiving, and inquired of the newspaper men and hotel-keepers as to their knowledge of his father. They directed him to the office of the County Recorder. He went and found his father's name recorded upon the book of deeds as a farmer, in Washington Township. Arriving there, he inquired whether John Cressout lived hereabouts. He was directed to a large comfortable house, surrounded by spacious barns, and having the appearance all around of thrift and wealth.

Let us paint the picture. It is Thanksgiving Day. Every thing is busy in John Cressout's kitchen. The large table in the spacious dining-room is being loaded with savory food. The ovens are steaming with crisp, brown turkeys, dressed in the most fragrant trimmings that the skillful hand of a housewife could prepare. The parlor is filled with a happy party of friends and neighbors of Mr. Cressout, who had gathered by invitation to partake of his Thanksgiving hospitality. There is a knock at the front door. Mr. Cressout attends to it. A stalwart, handsome young man, with a bright look and a perfect form, stands before him. He informs the stranger that this is the home of Mr. John Cressout. He is invited to a private room, and, at his request, Mrs. Cressout is summoned, as the stranger informed Mr. C. that he has a few private questions to ask them. Mrs. Cressout appears and seats herself by the side of her husband. The stranger asks them if they had a son by the name of Robert, who was lost in Chicago some seventeen years ago. They reply with anxious breath that they had. The stranger rises and makes himself known. Let us withdraw. The scene is too sacred for the public gaze. It is the reunion of loving hearts, the return of a wandering son. It was a day for thanksgiving indeed. It was a red-letter day in the home of John Cressout. No happier home than this could be found in all the domain of nature. With the Patriarch of old could they exclaim, "Rejoice, for my son that was dead is now alive; he that was lost is found."

Count Cagliostro.

The most brilliant and successful impostor known in Europe was the Italian, whose assumed name was Count Cagliostro. He died in prison in 1787, being then in his fifty-second year, after a career of varied imposture, such as seems vastly more like romance than most of the creations of the novelist. His forte was to surround himself with mystery, and having the aid of a confederate, he assumed such characters as were best adapted to the occasion. He was at one time a nobleman, and at another a naturalist. His next appearance might be in the guise of an extraordinary physician or a necromancer. The entire role of social life was exhausted by this wonderful deceiver, who included Greece, Egypt, Turkey and Arabia in his range of travel. At Medina he was a "distinguished mufti," and became a great favorite with the highest powers. He visited the Grand Master of the Knights of Malta, and the latter was so impressed with the dignity and accomplishments of the Count that he gave him letters of recommendation to the nobility of Europe. In Italy his success in this career of swindling was extraordinary. As alchemist, sorcerer and spiritualist, he claimed power not only over the "occult sciences," but also called up the spirits of the departed and held communion with the dead. He invented an elixir that insured perpetual life, and which, to the women, added unfading beauty. As a matter of course its sale was immense, and the inventor never remained long enough in a place to test its merits. He called himself 200 years old, and ascribed his youthful appearance to the use of this wonderful preparation, which had set death himself at defiance.

THE "Little Sisters of the Poor" have representatives in all parts of the world. In Paris they have five large houses where they care for poor people 60 years of age and upward. The order commenced at Saint Servan in 1840.

HERE AND THERE.

GEN. GRANT has gained 48 pounds since he commenced dining abroad.

A CAMEL race is to be run in Sutro, Nev., which will be followed by a five-mile race against horses.

A YOUNG lady, Miss Lillie Cunningham, at the risk of her own life, rescued three little children from a burning house at Columbus, Ind., last week.

EDITORS amount to something in Germany. For instance, the editor of the General Post-office journal is called a Reichsoberamtszeitungschreiber.

TWO maiden sisters, who have for 50 years lived and slept together in the Old Ladies' Home in Portsmouth, N. H., died there last week within four days of each other, and were buried together.

STANLEY'S African expedition cost the New York *Herald* and London *Telegraph* about $100,000. That is a noble private contribution to geographical science.

IMMENSE stores of wild honey were recently found in the fissures of the rocks in the mountain region in California by the workmen engaged in blasting a roadway for the Southern Pacific Railway.

THE Chief of the Cherokees, in his recent message, shows clearly that the Nation is a civilized one. The public debt is $12,316.83, and the treasury contains but $500.

NEWPORT, R. I., boasts a rarity in the person of a man who recently went to his employer and asked him to dock his wages 50 per cent, as he thought he was receiving more than he earned.

DETROITITES are justly indignant concerning a 30-pound package of dynamite which was recently discovered in an express office of that city. Its true character had been unknown, and it had been tossed about like other packages, with every risk of explosion.

A YOUNG man at a rifle match in Portland, Oregon, when his turn came at the target, shot a bystander through the heart. The killing may have been accidental, but the two men were bitter enemies, and there is doubt on the subject.

THE department for registering letters in the Post-office does a large business. During the past year nearly four and one half million letters were registered. Only an average of one in 5,000 was lost, and of those a large proportion were finally recovered.

A CHARLESTON (S. C.) paper speaks of a sale of farm lands in that vicinity, only two miles from the Northeast Railroad and Webdin River, and of excellent soil. Six hundred and twenty-eight acres were sold for $205, 800 acres for $220, 100 acres for $38, all half cash, and the rest in one year.

WILLIAM SWAINCOTT, of Montgomery County, New York, recently served on a Coroner's jury at the inquest over the body of a man who was so severely burned in a lime-kiln that it could not be recognized. Mr. Swaincott has since learned that the body was that of his father.

NOTHING like being able to raise your own frogs. A citizen of Newburyport, Mass., is fattening 500 frogs upon which he expects to feast. He keeps them in a barrel and feeds them with Indian meal and takes as much pride in them as if they were a coop of prize chickens.

MRS. REBECCA GUISHARD, who died in Baltimore a few days ago, at the age of 98, was one of the actors at the Richmond Theater on the fatal night of its burning in 1811. When the fire broke out she managed to reach the upper gallery, where her father, sister and child were seated, only to see them sink amid the ruins. She then jumped from the window and reached the ground unhurt by falling upon the dense mass of people outside.

IT is now said that Sitting Bull's name is Ton-ton-qua-na, which means the Buffalo-Looking-at-the-Sun. The setting sun seems to have a strange attraction to buffaloes on the plains. The whole herd stop and gaze at it, while the old bulls sit upon their haunches like dogs, and watch it until it sinks from sight. When a young brave, Sitting Bull always killed his buffalo while the sitting bulls were looking at the setting sun, and thus got the name of Ton-ton-qua-na, or Buffalo-Looking-at-the Sun.

A YOUNG lady in New Bedford, Mass., was invited to dine with a neighbor a few days since, and in eating a biscuit bit on a hard substance which she supposed to be a nail, so often found in flour; but on examination it proved to be a gold ring. The bread was a portion of some which she had sent to her neighbor the day before to try the quality of the flour, and the ring was one she lost from her finger while mixing the dough, and which she had missed that morning, but could not account for its whereabouts.